

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, Claims 2, 4-13 and 30-32 will remain pending in the application.

In the Office Action of July 21, 2003, the Examiner set forth a number of grounds for rejection. These grounds are addressed individually and in detail below.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 4, and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,290,949 to French et al. (hereinafter “French”) and U.S. Patent No. 5,981,225 to Kochanek et al. (hereinafter “Kochanek”) for the reasons set forth on pages 3 to 7 of the outstanding Office Action. Claims 1 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over French and Kochanek, and further in view of Salvapongse et al. (hereinafter “Salvapongse”) for the reasons set forth on pages 7-8 of the outstanding Office Action. Claims 1, 6, and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over French and Kochanek, and further in view of He et al. (hereinafter “He”) for the reasons set forth on pages 8-9 of the outstanding Office Action. Claims 1, 9-13 and 28-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over French and Kochanek, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,826,811 to Sehgal et al. (hereinafter “Sehgal”) and Kibbe et al. (hereinafter “Kibbe”) for the reasons set forth on pages 9-11 of the outstanding Office Action.

For the purpose of expediting the prosecution of this case, Applicants have canceled independent Claims 1 and 33, and dependent Claims 28-29.

Allowable Subject Matter

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner indicates that Claim 2 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form inclusive of all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants would also like to thank the Examiner for the telephone conference with the undersigned confirming the same on July 31, 2006. Accordingly, Claim 2 has been amended to include all of the limitations of Claim 1. Claims 4-9 have been amended to depend on Claim 2; Claims 10-13 and 30-32 depend directly or indirectly to Claim 2. Accordingly, Claims 2, 4-13 and 30-32 are allowable.

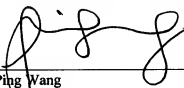
CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Ping Wang, M.D. (Reg. No. 48,328) at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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